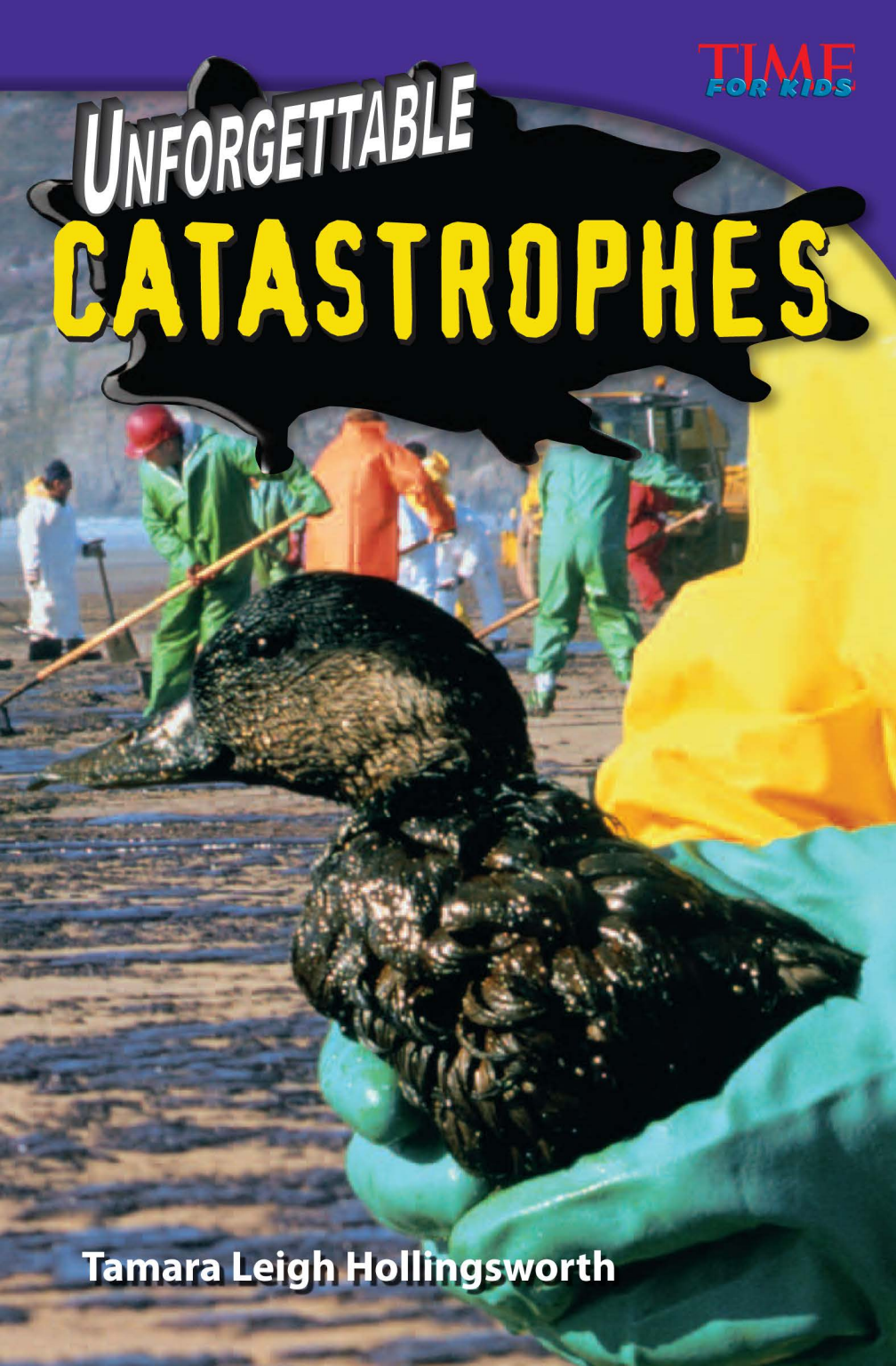

TIME FOR KIDS
UNFORGETTABLE
CATASTROPHES
Tamara Leigh Hollingsworth

For teachers' inspection only

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**Teacher Created Materials**
5301 Oceanus Drive
Huntington Beach, CA 92649-1030
http://www.tcmpub.com

**ISBN 978-1-4333-7946-6**
© 2013 Teacher Created Materials, Inc.

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# DEADLY MISTAKES

Volcanoes. Earthquakes. Hurricanes. Tornadoes. Disasters come when we least expect them and turn our lives upside down. They can fall from the sky or rise up from the ground. These events are terrifying, but often we know when they are coming. We can prepare for them.

But some of the worst **catastrophes** are those caused by humans, and they usually come as a huge surprise. Sometimes, man-made disasters are **accidental**. They happen because of flaws in a design. They happen because a structure was poorly planned or built. Other times, people are aware of the power they are unleashing. These are **intentional** man-made disasters. And they can be the deadliest of all. They say the only real mistake is one you don't learn from. And there's plenty to learn from here.



## THINK LINK

- What are some of the worst catastrophes in history?
- How can we prepare for these terrible events?
- How can we avoid repeating these mistakes in the future?

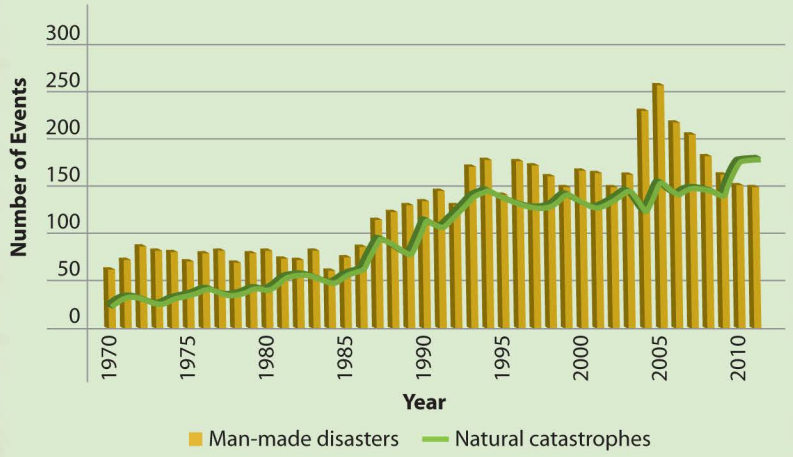
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Making mistakes is part of being human. But sometimes, those mistakes can have big consequences. And often, the mistakes we make can be prevented.

Sometimes, a catastrophe is out of our control. Even when we are sure nothing will go wrong, something can still go wrong. But people try to be safe. And in most countries, there are laws that force workers to follow strict safety rules.

## Running the Numbers

**New technology and safety practices mean man-made disasters are currently on the decline. Because they can be deadly, man-made disasters may be featured heavily on the news. But these events are actually very rare.**




**Source:** Swiss Re Economic Research and Consulting

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### Quick Fix?

When *natural* disasters occur, the natural world may one day return to the way it was before the disaster. But with many *man-made* disasters, that's not the case. Sometimes, the damage done by humans is too great to be undone.

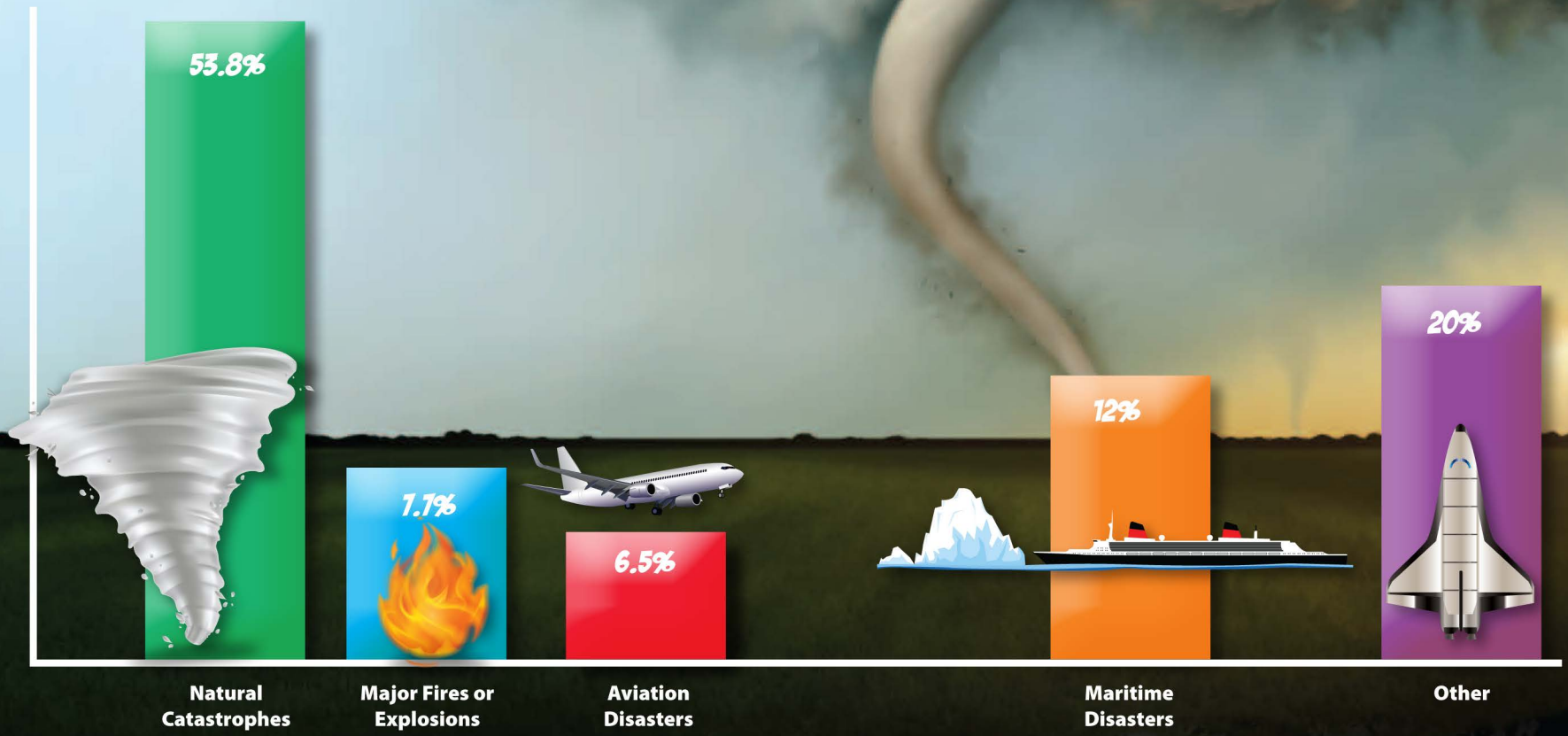
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DIG DEEPER!

## Recent Disasters

In 2011, 325 catastrophic events occurred around the world. One hundred fifty of them were man-made. And of those 150 disasters, 5,703 lives were lost.

Look closely at these recent disasters. Which ones do you think could have been prevented? The answer may not be clear. An event such as a fire may be caused by a bolt of lighting. That would be difficult to prevent. But a fire could also be caused by someone dropping a match in a forest. The real catastrophe is being careless.




**Source:** Swiss Re Economic Research and Consulting